

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims**

Claims 1 - 48 (Cancelled)

49. (Previously Presented) A backlight unit comprising:

a plurality of straight tube fluorescent lamps arranged substantially parallel to one another in the longitudinal direction of the fluorescent lamps;

driving means arranged on one-end side of the plurality of fluorescent lamps for driving the plurality of fluorescent lamps by applying a high voltage to one-end terminals of the plurality of fluorescent lamps; and

a reflection portion adapted to emit the light from the plurality of fluorescent lamps in a specific direction, wherein

brightness compensation means are provided for compensating for uneven brightness in the longitudinal direction of the plurality of fluorescent lamps by decreasing the brightness of the fluorescent lamps on one end side or increasing the brightness of the fluorescent lamps on the other end side or controlling brightness in combination from the both end sides,

the reflection portion is made up of first and second reflection layers having given optical reflectance and transmittance levels,

as the brightness compensation means, the reflection portion is configured with a first region having the first and second reflection layers stacked one above another in the direction of incidence of light and a second region made up only of the first reflection layer, and

the reflectance of the reflection portion is controlled using the first region with a relatively high reflectance and the second region with a reflectance lower than that of the first region.

Claims 50 - 61 (Cancelled)